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A

CIRCUMSTANTIAL ACCOUNT

OF THE ENSUING

REGATTA;

COMPREHENDING THE

Plan, Arrangement, Directions, &c.

RELATING TO

THAT ENTERTAINMENT:

With an INTRODUCTION, including a Summary View of our PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENTS, a Deſcription of a VENETIAN REGATTA, and a Recommendation of ſimilar patriotic Exhibitions in this country.

INTERSPERSED WITH

SEASONABLE REFLECTIONS AND REMARKS.

THE WHOLE FORMING

AN AGREEABLE COMPANION

FOR THE

SPECTATORS OF THAT ELEGANT DIVERSION.

LONDON:
Printed for the Author;
And ſold by J. BEW, No. 28, PATER-NOSTER-ROW.
(Price ONE SHILLING.)

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PURCHASED BY THE
S.S.B.
BRITANNICA

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TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THOMAS,

LORD LYTTELTON,

THE

FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS

ON THE ENSUING

REGATTA,

ARE

MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY HIS LORDSHIP'S

MOST OBEDIENT, AND

MOST HUMBLE SERVANT,

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CIRCUMSTANTIAL ACCOUNT

OF THE ENSUING

REGATTA.

NEXT to the care of enacting wholesome laws for the well ordering of a ſociety, and for ſecuring the liberty and property of its members, the inſtituting public games and ſpectacles, eſpecially ſuch as excite emulation, or a deſire of excelling in any uſeful art, is highly becoming the wiſdom of a brave and free people; and has always been eſteemed, in the beſt-regulated governments, a very material branch of policy: and, indeed, the former will appear too rigid and ſevere, without the intervention of ſome elegant and polite amuſement, which may incline the community to a chearful obedience.

As it is neceſſary, therefore, that mankind ſhould have vacations from buſineſs, intervals that ſweeten, and ſeaſons in which to reliſh life, it is the height of prudence to contrive, that they may be diverted without much loſs of time; and be idle, as it were, to ſome purpoſe.

Neither is it ſo difficult a matter to introduce ſuch recreations among the people, as may either allure their minds to virtue, or form their bodies for exploits. Theſe recreations are of two ſorts; public games, and public exerciſes: the one more immediately affect the body, the other the mind. For this reaſon, the moſt virtuous and flouriſhing ſtates have always particular regard to both theſe diverſions, to compleat the good citizen, and render him of ſervice to his country.

It is well known, that the games of Greece, ſo much celebrated by ancient poets and hiſtorians, were inſtituted by great and wiſe men, in honour of ſome god or hero; and that the exerciſes performed in theſe games were ſuch as were moſt proper to train up their youth for the ſervice of the ſtate in times of danger.

The moſt remarkable ſports of this kind among the moderns are the bull-feaſts (originally Mooriſh,) ſtill celebrated in Spain and Portugal;

Portugal; whence their gentry excel the other nations of Europe in horſemanſhip.

Juſts and tournaments, and ſhooting in the long bow, were heretofore very manly exerciſes, and worthy of encouragement; but an univerſal change in martial diſcipline has rendered them now as inſignificant as chariot-races, or the ancient practice of the ſling.

Mock fights and ſieges, directed by men of ſkill, might turn our holidays and feſtivals to good account; theſe would prove games of dignity, not only becoming the patronage of the great, but even worthy the conſideration of the legiſlature: and it were to be wiſhed that every gentleman of fortune would allot rewards in his rural domains to improve the inferior inhabitants in cudgel-playing and wreſtling. As care ſhould be taken in all amuſements to guard againſt effeminacy, ſo the introduction of any thing which ſhocks humanity, and inſpires a ſavage ferocity, ſhould be equally avoided.

Public ſpectacles in a free country ſhould be exhibited at as moderate an expence as elegance and decency will permit; and ſhould be ſo contrived, that the middle rank of ſociety may inoffenſively be admitted to partake of the diverſions, as well as thoſe of the firſt

faſhion. By this means a dignity is maintained in every claſs of the community, and a degree of politeneſs diffuſes itſelf through the ſeveral orders of the ſpectators.

It will not be improper, nor foreign to our purpoſe, to take notice of the public entertainments peculiar to this iſland, and how far they anſwer the ends above mentioned.

Theatrical repreſentations have been always reckoned among the firſt of national amuſements; as their frequent performance renders them more apt than any other to form the morals of a people. We are ſorry to remark, that, in the preſent age, the drama ſeems to be upon the decline, both with reſpect to compoſition and performance. Were it poſſible to blend the dull, inſipid morality of our preſent dramatic writings, with the witty (though wicked) enlivening ſcenes of a Congreve and a Wycherly, we know not of any entertainment that could be inve[illegible] equally amuſing, or half ſo inſtructive, [illegible]ch plays well performed.

Operas, it muſt be allowed, are a very elegant and polite amuſement, but not calculated to thrive in this country, becauſe Engliſhmen are not ſo univerſally prepared to underſtand the language of muſic, as they are to appre-

hend

hend expeſſions of wit and ſenſe. Therefore, amongſt us, operas cannot properly be called public entertainments, as they only form an amuſement for a ſelect audience.

Maſquerades may paſs for a very arch contrivance in countries where jealouſy paſſes for wiſdom; where every maſter of a family locks up his women; and where the two ſexes never have an opportunity of converſing promiſcuouſly, but in diſguiſe. In England, the ladies are as free as the gentlemen; and we have no diverſions nor public amuſements in which the one may not partake with as much propriety as the other. —— They muſt have but poor notions of politeneſs, who imagine this foreign extravagance any improvement to our national diverſions. The wearing of an odd maſk is, at beſt, a mean, mechanical way of being witty; and our maſqueraders are, beſides, with a very few exceptions, compleatly awkward in their borrowed characters. Without anſwering queſtions, they expect their dreſs ſhould ſpeak for them; they ſtalk about like a crowd of mutes; and the theatre in the Haymarket, upon theſe occaſions, reſembles the wardrobe of ſome ancient Gothic king, ſaid to be (in the days of ſuperſtition) animated by goblins.

Horſe-

Horſe-races properly come under the head of public entertainments. We are celebrated throughout the world for the ſwiftneſs of our horſes,—an empty praiſe without the addition of other qualities!—King William was the firſt of our monarchs who was ſenſible of this extravagance, and endeavoured to improve our racers into a ſerviceable breed, by obliging the horſes that ran for his plates to carry a more than ordinary weight. The preſent generation of race-horſes is of ſo ſlight a make as to become uſeleſs in all the exigencies of life.

There are other public ſpectacles, which, though not of ſo refined a nature, and not much attended to by perſons of diſtinction, are nevertheleſs proper, and have no ſmall influence upon the people for their good. Such in particular is the Lord Mayor's Show in this city; ſuch are the ſolemn proceſſions of corporations, or of any trading companies, or artificers, on ſtated days. Theſe pageantries ſerve to inſpire our youth with a love for their privileges, and ſeveral vocations; to quicken their induſtry, and to make them ambitious of arriving at the honours and dignities, which fall within their reſpective ſcenes of life.

But of all public entertainments thoſe which deſerve moſt to be advanced in Great Britain, are Naval Sports and Exerciſes, ſuch as Rowing,

ing, Sailing, &c. To be able to manage a boat with dexterity is of as great conſequence in this iſland, as it was to be an expert charioteer in ancient Greece.

Upon this occaſion it is our duty to do juſtice to the memory of Mr. Dogget, comedian, who has the honour of being the firſt founder of our Water-Games. By inſtituting an annual prize to be rowed for, he has raiſed up a laudable ambition in the youth of the Thames, put them upon ſtudying the knowledge of the river, and carrying the ſkill of the oar to perfection.

A moſt material part, therefore, of the approaching entertainment on the Thames, may be ſaid to be a liberal and elegant improvement upon the annual Rowing-Match on the firſt of Auguſt. But as many of our readers may be deſirous of an explanation of the Italian name given to it, the following particulars will not be deemed impertinent.

The word *Regatta* ſignifies a *ſtruggle for the maſtery*.—When any foreign Prince, or Nobleman of diſtinction, viſits Venice it is cuſtomary to entertain them with a Regatta, or rowing-match on the grand canal. A deſcription of one of theſe entertainments we ſhall here inſert, as authenticated to us by a ſpectator, from

which our readers may judge how far the British excels or falls short of the Venetian. But a Venetian gondola being materially different from a Thames wherry, it seems necessary to give our readers some idea of one.

A Gondola is a long narrow vessel, terminating at each end in a sharp point, considerably higher than the sides. They are managed by two gondoliers, who have one oar each, and row standing, with their faces the same way they go, the man at the head resting his oar on the left side of the gondola, and the other at the stern on the right: and this method is absolutely necessary for guiding a boat in those narrow canals. It is curious to observe with what dexterity they manage them; for it is very rare that they touch, much less are in danger of oversetting, though they are every instant within half an inch of each other.

The gondolas are all black, except those belonging to the ambassadors, and some few persons of distinction, who have permission to decorate theirs with gilding, &c. &c.

At the Venetian Regatta above mentioned, the gondolas of the young noblemen and persons of distinction were covered from stem to stern with silk flags, streamers, awnings, &c. of different colours, laced with gold or silver,

or both; the liveries of their rowers were the ſame; the coverings, which hung over their ſides, were ſcolloped, fringed, and taſſeled; and the whole made a moſt ſplendid and delightful appearance. The gondolas were rowed by four, ſome by ſix, but the greater number by eight oars, moſt of them gilt or ſilvered. On the ſtems and ſterns of ſome were erected large plumes of feathers, painted like the liveries, which were of ſuch colours as were moſt agreeable to the reſpective miſtreſſes of the young gentlemen; while others had nothing but tinſel made up in the form of plumes, which had a pretty effect when the ſun ſhone on them. One gondola of eight oars, decorated moſt ſumptuouſly, with green and gold interwoven, pleaſed all the company. It belonged to Signor Moroſini, who changes his whole equipage every Regatta, which is a whimſical piece of extravagance, as all the ornaments are the perquiſites of the rowers, and the expence on this occaſion is from 250 to 1000l. The owners of the gondolas ſit in the bows, and diſcharge from croſs-bows earthen balls at thoſe who may hinder or obſtruct the prize-rowers. On this occaſion there were more than twenty thouſand gondolas, barges, ſkiffs, &c. moſt of which were magnificently adorned, and added greatly to the brilliancy of the ſpectacle.

Such are the Regattas at Venice; and we may readily preſume, that the enſuing one on the Thames will not yield, in point of grandeur and magnificence, to that we have here deſcribed; but, from the acknowledged taſte of the managers, the ſeaſon of the year, the extenſive width of the river, and other concurrent circumſtances, will be far more ſplendid, more elegant, and conducted with greater regularity and decorum.

Aqueous ſports, and paſtimes of this ſort were frequently the amuſement of the polite Romans, in the time of Auguſtus, as we may learn from the following paſſage:

Four gallies firſt, which equal rowers bear,
Advancing, in the wat'ry liſts appear:
They gripe their oars; and every panting breaſt
Is rais'd by turns with hope, by turns with fear depreſt.
The clangor of the trumpet gives the ſign,
At once they ſtart, advancing in a line;
With ſhouts the ſailors rend the ſtarry ſkies,
Laſh'd with their oars, the ſmoaky billows riſe.
Exact in time, with equal ſtrokes they row;
At once the bruſhing oars, and brow,
Daſh up the ſandy waves, and ope the depths below.
Not fiery courſers, in a chariot race,
Invade the field with half ſo ſwift a pace.

VIRGIL.

Nor

Nor were our ancient Kings of England ſtrangers to this rational diverſion.—Gower, that old Engliſh Bard, who flouriſhed about the year 1390, in the reign of Henry IV. makes mention, in one of his poems, of having met the King and Court upon the river, on one of thoſe occaſions:

As it befylle, upon a tyde,
As thyngs whych ſhuide tho betyde,
Under the town of New Troye*,
Which toke of Brute† hys fyrſte joy,
On Themſe, when it was flowende,
As I by bote came rowende,
So, as fortune her tyme ſette,
My lyege Lorde perchaunce I mette;
And it befylle, as I came nygh,
Oute of my bote, when he me ſygh,
He bade me come into his barge,
And when I was with hym at large,
Amonges other thynges, ſeyd,
He hath ſuch charge upon me leyd, &c. &c.

But, to come down to later times—His late Royal Highneſs Frederic, Prince of Wales, was particularly fond of entertainments of this kind on the water, and frequently gave prizes

* The ancient name of London.

† According to the Monkiſh Legends, this iſland derives its name of Britain from one Brutus, who planted the firſt colony here.

of conſiderable value to be rowed for.—An account of one or two of thoſe, we hope, will not prove unentertaining to the reader.

On Thurſday, May 25th, O. S. 1749, being the anniverſary of the birth of Prince George (his preſent Majeſty), who then entered into his twelfth year, his Royal Highneſs the Prince of Wales gave a Silver Cup, value Twenty-five Guineas, to be rowed for by ſeven boats, with a pair of oars each, from Whitehall to Putney. They ſtarted about ſeven o'clock in the evening, and kept ſo cloſe together all the way, that there was ſcarce more than a boat's length diſtance betwixt any two of them. A great number of the nobility and gentry appeared in barges, elegantly decorated with pendants, ſtreamers, &c. and rowed by watermen in handſome uniforms. Their Royal Highneſſes, the Prince and Princeſs, preceded by a barge, in which was a compleat band of muſic, were rowed a-head of the wager-men, followed by Prince George, the young Princeſſes, &c. in a new-built barge, after the Venetian manner, with the watermen dreſſed in Chineſe habits, which made a very ſplendid appearance.—The number of gallies attending, rowed by young gentlemen in neat uniforms, gave an air of joy and feſtivity to the whole, ſeldom ſeen in ſuch a promiſcuous company.—After the race was

over,

over, their Royal Highneſſes returned in the ſame order, and landed at Whitehall ſtairs, from whence they went to Leiceſter-houſe, attended by the nobility, &c. where there was a ſplendid ball, and the evening concluded with the utmoſt harmony and ſatisfaction to every perſon concerned.

This entertainment gave riſe to another of the ſame kind, though on a more extenſive plan, and greatly tending to encourage improvemsnts in the arts of ſhip-building and ſailing, ſo neceſſary to be ſtudied and thoroughly underſtood by the natives of this iſland.

On Tueſday, Auguſt 1ſt, the ſame year, this patriotic Prince gave another Silver Cup, of Fifty Guineas value, to be ſailed for from Greenwich to the Nore, and back again, by veſſels from fifteen to twenty-five tons burden. Between one and two o'clock twelve boats ſtarted for this prize, which was won by a boat built on purpoſe, called the Princeſs Auguſta, belonging to George Bellas, Eſq; a Regiſter in Doctors Commons. In the going down, at Woolwich ſhe was a mile before the reſt, and at the Hope three miles; but, in coming up, by the ſhifting of the winds, and the ſituation they were all in, two ſhot by her at Graveſend; notwithſtanding

ſtanding which ſhe came in firſt by ten minutes, which was the next day at forty minutes paſt two in the afternoon.——George Bellas, Eſq; on receiving the prize, generouſly gave the value of it among the men who worked the boat.——His Royal Highneſs the Prince of Wales, with ſix or ſeven attendants, in his Venetian barge, and the rowers in Chineſe habits, drove gently before, for ſome time, having a crowd of boats about him, the people frequently huzzaing, and giving other unfeigned teſtimonies of their applauſe, which he received with that affability and condeſcenſion which a conſcious uprightneſs of heart never fails to inſpire, pulling off his hat, and returning the compliments which were made him from every quarter, and entering freely into that ſpirit of feſtivity which ſeemed to prevail among all ranks of people aſſembled upon the occaſion.——It was almoſt a perfect calm, and not the leaſt damage happened, though the river ſeemed overſpread with yachts, galleys, and ſmall boats.

Having thus taken a view of the ſeveral entertainments ſimilar to that we are treating of, we ſhall now confine ourſelves to what immediately concerns it.

The

The deſign of this elegant entertainment on the water originated in the Sçavoir Vivre Club ſome time laſt winter; and, to the honour of the Committee appointed to carry it into execution, let it be obſerved, that they have been indefatigably aſſiduous in their endeavours to render it the moſt elegant and ſuperb of the kind ever exhibited in Europe; and we have no doubt but the pleaſure and ſatisfaction the ſpectators muſt feel will amply compenſate them for the extraordinary trouble and fatigue they have put themſelves to upon this occaſion.

It muſt give the greateſt pleaſure to every lover of his country, to find, that, while this unhappy nation is diſtracted by party-feuds, there are found ſo many reſpectable noblemen and gentlemen, of truly patriotic principles, and whoſe abilities do honour to the ſphere they move in, who prefer the ſolid pleaſure of finding employment for the labouring mechanic, to the ideal ſatisfaction of ſignaliſing themſelves in the cabals of ſtate, or courting the acclamations of a giddy and intoxicated mob.

The noblemen and gentleman who conſtitute the Sçavoir Vivre Club, as alſo thoſe at Almack's, White's, Boodle's, and Gooſtree's, have, for ſome years paſt, not only principally

cipally engaged the attention of the polite circle at the weſt end of the town, but, by the variety, ſplendor, and magnificence of their entertainments, have afforded employment to many thouſands of induſtrious tradeſmen and artiſts, and given an extraordinary encouragement to almoſt every branch of commerce. —Yet, as the moſt laudable attempts are ſubject to be blown upon by the infectious breath of calumny, even thoſe noble and diſtinguiſhed perſonages have been cruelly inſulted by the ſnarlings of malevolence, the ravings of enthuſiaſm, and the wretched cant of fanatics of almoſt every denomination; inſtead of receiving that applauſe and commendation they are ſo juſtly entitled to, for their patriotic endeavours to promote the trade and manufactures of this country.

We could here adduce many obſervations, in anſwer to the various ſcandalous reflections and ill-natured invectives thrown out againſt the managers of this rational and polite entertainment. But we will not afford them ground, by ſeeming to gloſs over what in fact is not cenſurable, with ſpecious pretences and appearances of public good; therefore, we ſhall now leave thoſe muſty moraliſts to chew the cud of their malevolence, and gratify their ſpleen and ill nature unmoleſted, fully convinced, that none, but thoſe of weak heads or bad hearts,

can

can diſapprove of what is ſo ſelf-evidently deſerving of applauſe.

We ſhall now lay before the Public the plan of the Regatta, as publiſhed by order of the Managers appointed to conduct that entertainment.--And we apprehend, that, upon a due conſideration of its meritorious tendency, the public will concur with us in wiſhing, that the preſent exhibition may be viewed by perſons of fortune and power in a national light, and that, under their patronage and encouragement, more than one repetition of it may be annually eſtabliſhed.—To their notice, therefore, be the idea humbly recommended.

PLAN
OF THE
REGATTA.

THIS Entertainment is abſolutely fixed for the 23d or 24th of June inſt. as the weather proves favourable. The certainty of the day will be made known to the public by a red flag being diſplayed, at ten o'clock in the morning, over the center arch of Weſtminſter-bridge, which will continue flying all day; and likewiſe by the ringing of St. Margaret's bells, Weſtminſter, from ten o'clock in the morning till noon.

The number of tickets to be iſſued are limited to One Thouſand Three Hundred, including thoſe for the Royal Family, Foreign Ambaſ-

Ambaſſadors, &c. Three Hundred of which are made out to admit perſons by land to Ranelagh, who are timorous, or do not chuſe to appear upon water.

The ſubſcriptions were the ſame as for the late maſquerades at the Pantheon and Carliſle-houſe, and were ſoon compleatly filled up, though no perſon was admitted to be a ſubſcriber unleſs he belonged to one of the following clubs, viz. Boodle's, White's, Stapleton's, Almack's, Sçavoir Vivre, or Gooſetree's.

As the barges belonging to the Lord Mayor and the city-companies, which they have been ſo obliging as to grant the uſe of on this occaſion, will not conveniently accommodate all the ſubſcribers, thoſe ladies and gentlemen who wiſh to have places in them are to apply to the Marſhals and Directors, who will ſelect ſuch a number as will be ſeated agreeably, and without rendering their ſituation irkſome or inconvenient.

Ladies and gentlemen who cannot have ſeats in thoſe barges, are to arrange their own parties, and provide their own barges or boats; but to order them in ſuch a manner as to agree with the following regulations, iſſued by the Marſhal and Directors:

" I. That the rowers of the private barges " be uniformly dreſſed, and in ſuch a manner " as may accord with ſome one of the three " marine colours, choſen by the Marſhal and " Directors of the Regatta, viz. the White, " the Blue, or the Red.

" II. The company to begin to embark at " the ſeveral ſtairs adjacent to Weſtminer- " bridge, as well on the Lambeth as n the " Weſtminſter-ſide, between the hours of ſix " and ſeven in the evening.

" III. The Marſhal's barge of twelve oars, " carrying a blue ſtandard, and the word " REGATTA in large gold characters *,

* By a former plan, it is ſaid, the Marſhal's barge will carry St. George's Enſign, (that is, white field, with a red croſs); but this is a very immaterial difference.

" will be ſtationed to the weſtward of the
" center arch; the reſt of the boats and barges
" to ſpread at ſuch diſtances on the rendez-
" vous, as to fill all the arches of Weſtminſter-
" bridge at once; but it is to be underſtood,
" that none of the private boats and barges,
" or others, do, upon any account, go into
" the center arch, which muſt be left entire-
" ly free for the Race-boats.

" IV. St. George's Diviſion, and all boats
" and barges, in White liveries, to occupy the
" two arches on each ſide the center-arch; the
" Red Diviſion are to take poſſeſſion of the
" four arches next Lambeth; and the Blue
" the four next Weſtminſter.

" V. Twelve Race-boats, each rowed by
" two young watermen, who have come out
" of their apprenticeſhip ſince June 1772;
" are to ſet off from Weſtminſter-bridge pre-
" ciſely at ſeven o'clock, and to row round
" a veſſel, which will be moored off Wa-
" terman's-hall, near London-bridge, from
" whence they are to return back to Weſt-
" minſter-

" minſter-bridge; and the three firſt boats
" that clear the center arch, are to be declared
" the winners of the following prizes:

" Firſt men to have Ten Guineas each,
" with Coats and Badges.

" Second men—Seven Guineas each, with
" Coats and Badges of an inferior value.

" Third men—Five Guineas each, with
" Coats and Badges of leſs value than the
" ſecond.

" Beſides which, every ſucceſsful waterman
" will have an enſign given him to wear one
" year on the Thames, with the word
" REGATTA in gold letters thereon inſcri-
" bed, with the figures 1, 2, or 3, according to
" the order in which he may arrive at the
" cloſe of the race.

" VI. The twelve boats, when the race
" ſhall be over, are to wait on the Marſhal's
" barge, and to obey whatever orders may be
given

" given from thence, both going up the river " and returning home when the entertainment " is ended.

" The whole proceſſion to move up the " river from, Weſtminſter-bridge, ſoon after " the Race-boats arrive; the Marſhal's divi- " ſion rowing a-head: the Red diviſion are " not to put themſelves in motion till three " minutes after the Marſhal's diviſion have " ſailed; and the Blue to leave the ſame in- " terval of time after the red."

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Since the publication of the above orders and regulations, the Marſhal and Directors have thought proper to make a conſiderable alteration in the prizes, and are now reſolved to give the firſt Watermen new Boats, with Coats and Badges, the ſecond and third prizes in proportion, and the remainder of the twenty four half a guinea each for their day's ſervice.——This alteration all muſt allow to be judiciouſly made, and better calculated to inſpire induſtry than the former; as the providing a young fellow with a boat and furniture

niture who is just beginning to make his way in the world, puts him in a method of not only gaining a livelihood, but lays the foundation of his future fortune, by giving him an opportunity of acquiring at least a decent competence, and possibly a happy independence in life.—On the other hand, when a young man, who has the unhappiness not to possess a greater share of prudence and œconomy than generally comes to the lot of youth void of experience, gets an easy possession of a sum of money, it most frequently happens that the consequence of the gift is contrary to the intention of the giver, and the truth of the old adage, *Light come light go*, is never more often verified than upon such occasions.—We beg the reader's pardon for this digression——but to return—

The platform of Chelsea Hospital, at the particular desire of the Marshal and Directors, is to be open, for the greater conveniency of the Ladies and Gentlemen disembarking.

Three military bands of music, composed of fifes, drums, cymbals, &c. will be habited

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in a manner conſonant to the naval flags of Great Britain, and be properly ſtationed, as will likewiſe three other ſelect bands, of the moſt eminent maſters on wind-inſtruments; all under ſuch regulations as may beſt entertain the company while on the water, and at the time of diſembarking.

The ſailing boats on the river are to draw up in the form of a creſcent, facing Ranelagh-ſtairs, which, added to the diſpoſition of the muſic in the Gardens, will make that point of view by far the moſt eligible and ſtriking.

Circular ranges of tables, with proper intervals, will be placed round the Rotunda at Ranelagh, in ſuch a manner as to form a magnificent amphitheatre (pyramidically riſing towards the center, and terminating in an orcheſtra), where the whole company of One Thouſand Three Hundred Perſons may be commodiouſly ſeated at one time. The doors to be thrown open at eleven o'clock. The ſeveral receſſes on the ground-floor are to

ſerve as ſide-boards for the waiters, and for a variety of refreſhments, &c.

The ſupper and its decorations are to be conducted under the immediate inſpection of Mrs. Cornelys, ſo juſtly celebrated for her elegance and taſte; of whoſe abilities in this department the nobility and gentry have had ſo many ſtriking inſtances, as to render all deſcription of what may now be expected unneceſſary.

In the center of the Rotunda, the orcheſtra will conſiſt of One Hundred and Twenty of the moſt celebrated vocal and inſtrumental performers in Great Britain. None but the firſt maſters for eminence in their profeſſion will compoſe this band, ſuch as Giardini, Fiſher, &c. &c. Beſides which ſeveral other corps of muſicians will be ſo diſpoſed, as may beſt tend to the entertainment of that part of the company who chuſe to amuſe themſelves by walking in the Gardens before or after ſupper.

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The muſical compoſitions, which are to be performed by the capital band, are to conſiſt of ſeveral full pieces, ſolos, ſolo-concertos, and ſome of the moſt approved catches and glees.

The entire diſpoſition and management of the muſic is committed to the care and direction of a Noble Lord, famous for his muſical abilities, both with regard to compoſition and performance, who has ſelected ſuch pieces as will have the beſt effect both on the water and in the gardens; and, from his acknowledged ſkill in this liberal ſcience, the Public have juſtly formed the higheſt expectations from that part of the entertainment.

On the verge of the canal will be erected the Temple of Neptune, in form of an antique amphitheatre, ninety-ſix feet in length, ſixty feet wide, and about the ſame in height. In this building, which is intended to communicate with the Rotunda by covered arcades, will be placed a choice band of muſi-

cians, in sylvan dresses, to play minuets, cotillons, country-dances, &c.

Fancy-dresses are not absolutely required, although many Ladies and Gentlemen have chosen to appear in them on this occasion. But, as the first mourning will be out on the day preceding that appointed for the Regatta, the Ladies will, in general, be dressed in white, which must give an uniformity and most agreeable appearance to the whole scene.

The Royal Family have been respectfully invited to partake of this diversion; and cards of invitation have likewise been sent to all the Foreign Ambassadors, Strangers of Distinction, Lord Mayor of London, First Lord of the Admiralty, and to all the other great Officers of State.

So much has this polite entertainment excited the attention of the public, that the Court of Common Council, and Committee for the Improvement of the Navigation of the River

Thames, have fitted up a ſplendid barge, for the accommodation of their Ladies and themſelves, on the day appointed for this grand exhibition. It is One Hundred and Fifty Feet long, will conveniently hold Three Hundred Perſons, and be decorated with the utmoſt magnificence.

On Thurſday, the 13th inſtant, near Three Hundred young watermen, all of whom had compleated the term of their apprenticeſhip ſince June 1772, applied to Mr. Roberts (who built the prize-boats for the Regatta), in order that Twenty-four might be elected to row for the prizes given on this occaſion, when, after caſting lots, the ſucceſsful candidates were informed of the alteration made by the Directors in the prizes, from what was formerly agreed on; at which they expreſſed their ſatisfaction, and the moſt grateful ſenſe of the honour conferred on them.

Beſides the precautions which will be taken by the Water-Bailiff, and other magiſtrates of authority on the river, for the preſervation

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of order, and the ſecurity of the ſpectators, a number of people are appointed by the Marſhal and Directors, who will be properly ſtationed in barges and ſmall boats, to prevent any inconveniency from the great number of veſſels which will neceſſarily be aſſembled on this occaſion; and, in ſhort, ſuch methods will be uſed to enſure the public ſafety, that very little danger may be apprehended.—But, in caſe of any accident unexpectedly happening, we would recommend it to the medical gentlemen, belonging to the Society for the Recovery of Drowned Perſons, to attend, with their proper aſſiſtants, by which means, all diſaſters, whether obvious or unforeſeen, will be effectually provided againſt.

A vaſt number of tradeſmen, of almoſt every profeſſion, are employed in fitting up the gardens, in a moſt magnificent and ſuperb manner; and the Rotunda will be painted in the utmoſt brilliancy of colours, which, by the reflection of the many thouſand lamps with which the whole is to be illuminated, will have the nobleſt effect, and make the appear-

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ance without correſpond with the feſtive gaiety reigning within.

We are informed that a celebrated lady, whoſe rank, beauty, and taſte, are equally conſpicuous, intends to appear in the character of Cleopatra, as inimitably deſcribed by Dryden:

Her galley down the ſilver Cydnos row'd,
The tackling ſilk, the ſtreamers wav'd with gold;
The gentle winds were lodg'd in purple ſails;
Her nymphs, like Nereids, round her couch were plac'd;
Where ſhe, another ſea-born Venus, lay.
She lay, and leant her cheek upon her hand,
And caſt a look ſo languiſhingly ſweet,
As if, ſecure of all beholders hearts,
Neglecting ſhe could take 'em: Boys, like Cupids,
Stood fanning, with their painted wings, the winds
That play'd about her face: but if ſhe ſmil'd,
A darting glory ſeem'd to blaze abroad;
That mens deſiring eyes were never wearied,
But hung upon the object. To ſoft flutes
The ſilver oars kept time; and while they play'd,
The hearing gave new pleaſure to the ſight;
And both to thought: 'twas heav'n, or ſomewhat more;

For

For she so charm'd all hearts, that gazing crouds
Stood panting on the shore, and wanted breath
To give their welcome voice.

Such are the particulars of the approaching REGATTA, which we have endeavoured to collect and arrange with as much perspicuity and minuteness as the nature of the subject would admit.—We shall now take a view of some of the supposed disadvantages and inconveniences which it has been suggested will result from it, and endeavour to point out the futility of reasoning upon consequences which will not, nay cannot, follow what has its foundation on the solid basis of public good.

We are of opinion that diversions of this nature may be beneficial, even if their promoters are men of vicious characters, (which, at present, is not the case) and are influenced by no other motive but that of contributing to their own pleasures.

It is an universally allowed maxim, that there is no man, or class of men, free from errors,

errors, and failings; and if from these few or no consequences of an evil tendency follow, but, on the contrary, a certain public good arises, highly beneficial to the community, that man must be an enemy to society, without a social virtue in his composition, who will not look with a forgiving eye upon a few trifling circumstances, which, however reprehensible in themselves, are attended with effects of the most public national utility.

It is an old observation, that private vices are public benefits, and that the petty crimes of individuals are highly conducive to the safety and well-being of a state.—How far this may prove true, upon a critical and philosophical investigation, we will not at present attempt to enquire. It is sufficient for us to observe, that if the consequences of any action are good, charity obliges us to overlook the motive, and in the happy effect forget the cause.

But it is objected, that, however advantageous the Regatta may prove to the inhabi-

tants of the metropolis, those who depend on the ſummer reſidence of our nobility and gentry will be materially affected by it. There may be a few inſtances in which this complaint may be well founded; but the noblemen and gentlemen of Great-Britain have, in general, adopted a method of living quite different from that of their anceſtors. Travel the nation over in the ſummer, and you will hardly find a Lord, a Knight, or a Squire at his ſeat; and a Duke is an *outlandiſh* creature, a ſight not to be ſeen in a country church once in an age. The landlord is almoſt every where grown out of the knowledge of his tenants, and is as great a ſtranger to his manor, as if it were a plantation in the Indies: while, in the mean time his ſteward tyrannizes over the farmers and peaſants in the abſence of his lord.

Bath, Tunbridge, and a few other places may, indeed, feel the temporary abſence of their ſupporters;—but foreign countries will certainly be the greateſt ſufferers by it, as it will, for a time, detain thoſe, who, under the ſpecious

cious appearance of travelling for the benefit of their health, ſquander their fortunes in Gallic and Tranſalpine extravagance.

It is likewiſe objected againſt this entertainment, that by calling tradeſmen and labourers from their reſpective employments, inflaming their curioſity, and ſetting them a holiday-making, is highly detrimental to their wives and families, and not only injurious to the health, but deſtructive of the morals of the poorer ſort of people, by giving them an opportunity of indulging their propenſity to idleneſs, from which proceeds every other vice the labouring part of mankind are guilty of.——But, ſurely, thoſe who make this objection cannot be ſerious, or, if they are, they muſt be very inconſiderate. Seaſonable holidays are ſo far from encouraging idleneſs, that the very reverſe is the truth; by a little relaxation from buſineſs, the mind is invigorated, and the body rendered more able to endure labour; and the hard-working man, after his holiday, returns to his employment with high ſpirits, an alacrity of diſpoſition, and recruited

ſtrength.—Beſides, if what cauſes this holiday furniſhes the labourer with a month's work, ſurely the money he earns is cheaply obtained. But, allowing this objection its full force, it muſt neceſſarily fall to the ground, when we conſider that this entertainment not beginning till ſeven or eight in the evening, every man's day's work is finiſhed, and conſequently no time loſt.

On the other hand, the advantages accruing to the community in general from this amuſement are manifold and ſelf-evident;—we beg leave to particularize the following:

It has been given out, and with ſome degree of probability, that this diverſion is politically intended to prevent our nobility and gentry from attending the coronation of the French King; which, if well founded, is highly commendable, and does honour to the underſtanding of thoſe who have ſo opportunely planned it.

Every object which is calculated to promote the welfare and ſafety of the ſtate, is truly deſerving

deſerving of our encouragement; and as the very exiſtence of this nation depends in a great meaſure on her fleet, there is an abſolute neceſſity for the keeping up of nurſeries for ſeamen, in the time of peace, that we may never be at a loſs for men, in caſes of emergency.

The peculiar qualifications of a good ſeaman ariſe from his being early and continually accuſtomed to the water; whence ſpring not only his intrepid behaviour in ſtorms and dangers, but a liking, and even a fondneſs to that perilous element, almoſt equally ſtrong as the love men bear to their native country. They, who from their childhood are familiarized to the rolling and toſſing of boats and ſhips, are not ſubject to the ſickneſs and uneaſineſs which diſpirit moſt landmen in their firſt voyages. Their ſteps on board become daily more aſſured, and in time they acquire a ſteady tread upon the deck, while they ſee others reeling to and fro, like men overpowered by wine. At length they gain an habitual firmneſs of body and mind, and are able to maintain the utmoſt compoſure in the tumult

of

of tempeſtuous weather, by which means they are capable of exerting their whole activity, ſkill, and experience in that criſis of time wherein the greateſt preſence of mind is required to preſerve their veſſels from ſudden ruin, either by ſinking in the deep, or being wrecked upon ſhoals or rocks.

Next to the vaſt body of mariners employed in the Britiſh fiſhery, the watermen on the river Thames conſtitute the greateſt nurſery for ſeamen to man the fleet:—it is highly commendable, therefore, to render that body as numerous as poſſible, by giving every encouragement to their profeſſion, with ſuch rewards as the preſent.

Oeconomy and frugality may be conſidered as indeterminate virtues, as they depend merely on ſituation and circumſtance. In a commercial country, where a quick circulation of money is abſolutely neceſſary, they are highly detrimental. In thoſe, therefore, to whom fortune has been profuſely laviſh of her favours, luxury, and even extravagance, are

not

not only excuſeable, but in a certain degree commendable.

The late King of France, notwithſtanding he was an abſolute Prince, thought it a very requiſite piece of policy to oblige his nobility and gentry to live liberally and hoſpitably among the lower claſſes of people; and to diſcourage every ſpecies of avarice, or even frugality, among men of fortune and rank, and when Count Magalloti had been ſome time governor of Valenciennes, he began to think of hoarding, and as (Dryden expreſſes it) *to pocket up his prince.* To palliate his avarice, he wrote to Monſ. Lauvois (then Secretary at war), to inform him that his health was not very good, and that his phyſician adviſed him to leave off ſet ſuppers. When the King was told of this, he replied to the ſecretary, "Let the governor know my opinion is, that it will be for his health to have ſuppers;" and the Count, upon ſecond thoughts, followed the King's preſcription.

Beſides, the luxury of the rich, (when it does not exceed the bounds of virtue and prudence,

dence) is the wealth and ſupport of the poor, and the beſt-judged charity; for what is given in groſs ſums to thoſe who appear in neceſſity is often miſtakenly applied to maintain preſent idleneſs, or reward paſt extravagance; whereas whatever is laid out upon ſuch manufactures as employ multitudes of people, can never be miſapplied. It might eaſily be made appear, that there is not a piece of wrought ſilk, linen, or woolen cloth, which has not contributed to the maintenance of more than an hundred thouſand induſtrious people, who muſt be ſupported one way or other.

Manly exerciſes ſhould be promoted as much as poſſible in this age when effeminacy is ſo univerſally prevalent.—Our modern fine gentlemen perform their exercoiſes moſtly by candle-light; ſedentary ſports are moſt faſhionable, ſuch as enfeeble the body, and render it liſtleſs and delicate in all its motions. We have indeed a few robuſt, clowniſh gentlemen, but in general they are thought diſqualified for any conſiderable poſts, whether civil or military; and are ſeldom or never promoted to any

any titles of honour, above knighthood. The only exercise now generally practised, that seems to require some exertion of the arm, and a lively spring of the wrist, is the violent rattling of two little square bones, in a small cylindrical box, about five inches deep, and two and a half diameter.

Little apology, it is presumed, is necessary for the foregoing pages. A desire of gratifying the public curiosity respecting an entertainment which is at present the object of general attention, together with the obvious intention of profiting by it, were the motives which induced the Author to the undertaking.

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MUSEUM S.L.B. BRITANNICUM

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